

September 29, 1960

Dr. E. M. Foster  
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Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Mike:

Mei Cohn has brought to my attention that A. D. Kaiser was being nominated for the Lilly award. I have already written to you with regard to another candidate, and I certainly would not wish to demean the contributions and qualifications that Gerry Marr has made to bacteriology. But for precision, imagination and meticulousness in scientific research, I really have to give Dale Kaiser a very considerable lead. I am not sure how profitable it is to spend much time thinking who is the "best" microbiologist in a given age class. But I cannot easily think of anyone whom I hold in higher esteem in this respect. His work on the mapping of lambda was a magnificent success of technique and diligence and I have to say that he also offered a highly improbable model of the genetic relationships of lambda to the bacterium that has so far stood up against every assault. His more recent work with Dave Hogness on the isolation of biologically active DNA from lambda is a paragon of experimental work - the main thing I would have to criticise about it is that he was so cautious and took so long to publish it since he wanted to leave no possible gaps in the development of the work. Having been once a Lilly man myself, I would be proud to have been in a group to which his name will add further distinction and solid merit.

Yours cordially,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/jh

bcc: Mei Cohn: It just occurs to me that Dale may have three strikes against him, namely that Stanford already has three Lilly-men of more or less recent vintage. I can't think of any other reason why he would not get this award.